

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date March 16, 2021

**REPORT TO:** Melinda Coleman, City Manager  
**REPORT FROM:** Michael Martin, AICP, Assistant Community Development Director  
**PRESENTER:** Michael Martin, AICP, Assistant Community Development Director  
**AGENDA ITEM:** Conditional Use Permit, North Fire Station, 1530 County Road C East

---

**Action Requested:** ☒ Motion ☐ Discussion ☒ Public Hearing  
**Form of Action:** ☒ Resolution ☐ Ordinance ☐ Contract/Agreement ☐ Proclamation

---

### **Policy Issue:**

Michael Mondor, Fire Chief for the City of Maplewood, is proposing the construction of a new North Fire Station that would be located at 1530 County Road C East – the current site of Fire Station No.3. The proposed project includes the demolition of the current station and clearing of a portion of the existing approximately three-acre site to allow for the construction of the new two-story, approximately 35,000 square foot North Fire Station. The new fire station will include drive-through apparatus bays, command vehicle parking, administrative space, meeting and living quarters for fire and EMS staff.

### **Recommended Action:**

Motion to approve a resolution for a conditional use permit for a new fire station building at 1530 County Road C East.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Is There a Fiscal Impact? ☒ No ☐ Yes, the true or estimated cost is \$0.

Financing source(s): ☐ Adopted Budget ☐ Budget Modification ☐ New Revenue Source  
☐ Use of Reserves ☒ Other: This approval does not grant funding of the fire station project. The city council will be approving the funding of the project under a separate agenda item.

### **Strategic Plan Relevance:**

☐ Financial Sustainability ☐ Integrated Communication ☐ Targeted Redevelopment  
☒ Operational Effectiveness ☐ Community Inclusiveness ☐ Infrastructure & Asset Mgmt.

The city deemed the applicant's application complete on February 4, 2021. The initial 60-day review deadline for a decision is April 5, 2021. As stated in Minnesota State Statute 15.99, the city is allowed to take an additional 60 days if necessary to complete the review.

## **Background:**

### **Conditional Use Permit**

All public buildings in Maplewood require city council approval of a conditional use permit. A special use permit was originally approved on September 27, 1973, permitting a fire station to operate on this site. The proposed new building will continue this established use. Staff believes the proposed new fire station building will continue to be compatible with this neighborhood.

### **Design Review**

#### *Site Plan*

The building will be situated on the site with the apparatus bays located to the west and the office and administration portion of the building to the east. Emergency response vehicles will have direct access to the north onto County Road C East with the return route off of Hazelwood Street North. To the north and south of the apparatus bay areas will be a concrete paved apron for vehicle access. Along the southern edge of the south paved apron 19 staff parking stalls will be provided along with a wooden privacy fence to minimize disruption to the adjacent residential property. To the east side of the new fire station building, a bituminous paved public parking lot is proposed with 39 parking stalls. Two bio infiltration basins will also be constructed in the southeast corner of the site as part of the storm water management system.

County Road C, east of Hazelwood Street, is identified in the city's Parks & Recreation Master Plan, along with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, as a priority corridor for pedestrian facilities. A sidewalk shall be installed along County Road C, from Hazelwood Street to the property limits at Germain Street. The applicant will need to work with the city's engineering department to ensure the placement of the required sidewalk avoids and protects the oak tree near the corner of Hazelwood Street and County Road C.

#### *Building Elevations*

The building exterior is proposed to consist of load-bearing insulated precast concrete wall panels with a thin brick veneer. The brick veneer will be cast into the structural concrete wall panels to provide a brick masonry appearance to the building. Two colors of brick veneer will be used, a lighter gray as the main field color with a darker grey accent color. The steel framed roof structure will be clad with a membrane roofing system with a pre-finished dark bronze parapet cap. Rooftop mechanical equipment will be screened with a structural steel frame clad with metal panels to match the exterior building elements. Rooftop mechanical units will be placed over both the apparatus bay and the two-story administration and living quarters areas.

Exterior windows will be aluminum storefront framing with a dark bronze anodized finish and insulated glazing. A continuous clearstory window will be incorporated along the north façade of the apparatus bay area. Exterior vehicle doors are proposed to be fully glazed, pre-finished metal overhead or four-fold doors in a matching color to the dark bronze roof edge trim.

Pre-finished metal wall and soffit panels will be used to provide accent elements and a variety of textures to the exterior façade. A red accent color is being used both above the northern apparatus bay doors and in a vertical element along the east façade. A lighter gray accent color is also being used to clad a horizontal soffit element along the north and east façade of the two-story portion of the building.

The upper portion of the west apparatus bay wall will be clad in pre-finished metal cladding and will incorporate a translucent panel window opening as can be seen in the northwest perspective view. The deviation from the brick clad precast panels used in other areas of the building is being driven in large part by the need to use a lighter weight structural system above a proposed storm shelter area.

### *Landscaping*

The existing fire station was developed on the northwest corner of the property, encompassing only one-third of the site. The remaining open space is heavily wooded. The new fire station development includes a larger building and additional parking, encompassing two-thirds or more of the property. The development of the lot as proposed requires the removal of a large number of trees - 1,585 caliper inches, or 98 percent, of the significant trees on the site. The landscape plan shows 82 trees and 36 native shrubs, equaling 211 caliper inches of replacement trees. This is 1,624 caliper inches less than the 1,835 caliper inches of replacement trees required.

### *Parking*

The project is proposing 39 parking spaces east of the building and 19 parking spaces south of the building – totaling 58 spaces for this site. City ordinance would require 42 spaces for the office areas of the building – 8,363 square feet – and 16 parking spaces for the bay parking areas inside of the building – 15,445 square feet. Staff is not including the living quarters area of the building for purposes of developing a parking count due to the unique nature of this building and deems the parking requirements are being met with this proposed project.

### *Lighting*

The applicant's submitted photometric plan meets all city requirements.

### Department Comments

#### *Engineering*

Please see Jon Jarosch's engineering report, dated February 9, 2021, attached to this report.

#### *Environmental*

Please see Shann Finwall and Carole Gernes' environmental report, dated March 9, 2021, attached to this report.

### Board and Commission Review

February 16, 2021: The community design review board reviewed this project and recommend approval.

March 16, 2021: The planning commission will hold a public hearing and review this project.

## Reference Information

### *Site Description*

Site Size: 3.05 acres

Existing Land Use: Fire Station

### *Surrounding Land Uses*

North: Single Family Homes

East: Single Family Homes

South: Single Family Homes

West: Community Gardens and future development site of a senior housing project

### *Planning*

Existing Land Use: Institutional

Existing Zoning: R1 – Single Dwelling

## **Attachments:**

1. Conditional Use Permit Resolution
2. Design Review Resolution
3. Overview Map
4. 2040 Future Land Use Map
5. Zoning Map
6. Applicant's Narratives
7. Site Plan
8. Landscape Plan
9. Building Elevations
10. Jon Jarosch's Engineering Report, dated February 9, 2021
11. Shann Finwall and Carole Gernes' Environmental Report, dated March 9, 2021
12. Revised Tree Survey, March 9, 2021
13. Community Design Review Board Draft Minutes, February 16, 2021
14. Applicant's Plans (separate attachment)

## **CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT RESOLUTION**

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

Section 1. Background.

1.01 Michael Mondor, Fire Chief for the City of Maplewood, has requested approval of a conditional use permit.

1.02 The property is located at 1530 County Road C East and is legally described as:

That part of Lots 33 and 34, Block 1 of AUDITORS SUBDIVISION NO. 76 as established and recorded in Ramsey County, Minnesota; being northerly of the southerly 234 feet thereof.

Subject to a road easement over, under, and across the easterly 33 thereof.

Section 2. Standards.

2.01 General Conditional Use Permit Standards. City Ordinance Section 44-1097(a) states that the City Council must base approval of a Conditional Use Permit on the following nine standards for approval.

1. The use would be located, designed, maintained, constructed and operated to be in conformity with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Code of Ordinances.
2. The use would not change the existing or planned character of the surrounding area.
3. The use would not depreciate property values.
4. The use would not involve any activity, process, materials, equipment or methods of operation that would be dangerous, hazardous, detrimental, disturbing or cause a nuisance to any person or property, because of excessive noise, glare, smoke, dust, odor, fumes, water or air pollution, drainage, water run-off, vibration, general unsightliness, electrical interference or other nuisances.
5. The use would not exceed the design standards of any affected street.
6. The use would be served by adequate public facilities and services, including streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, water and sewer systems, schools and parks.
7. The use would not create excessive additional costs for public facilities or services.
8. The use would maximize the preservation of and incorporate the site's natural and scenic features into the development design.
9. The use would cause minimal adverse environmental effects.

Section 3. Findings.

3.01 The proposal meets the specific conditional use permit standards.

Section 4. City Review Process.

4.01 The City conducted the following review when considering the conditional use permit for a planned unit development amendment request.

1. On March 16, 2021, the planning commission held a public hearing. City staff published a hearing notice in the Pioneer Press and sent notices to the surrounding property owners. The planning commission gave everyone at the hearing a chance to speak and present written statements. The planning commission recommended that the city council \_\_\_\_\_ this resolution.
2. On March 22, 2021, the city council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the planning commission and city staff.

Section 5. City Council.

5.01 The city council hereby \_\_\_\_\_ the resolution. Approval is based on the findings outlined in section 3 of this resolution. Approval is subject to the following conditions: (additions are underlined and deletions are crossed out):

1. All construction shall follow the approved plans, date-stamped February 4, 2021. The planning staff may approve minor changes.
2. The proposed construction must be substantially started within one year of council approval or the permit shall become null and void.
3. The city council shall review this permit in one year.
4. Comply with the requirements of the city's engineering department.

\_\_\_\_\_ by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, on March 22, 2021.

## **DESIGN REVIEW RESOLUTION**

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

### **Section 1. Background.**

1.01 Michael Mondor, Fire Chief for the City of Maplewood, has requested approval of site and design plans for a new fire station project.

1.02 The property is located at 1530 County Road C East and is legally described as:

That part of Lots 33 and 34, Block 1 of AUDITORS SUBDIVISION NO. 76 as established and recorded in Ramsey County, Minnesota; being northerly of the southerly 234 feet thereof.

Subject to a road easement over, under, and across the easterly 33 thereof.

1.03 On February 16, 2021, the community design review board reviewed this request. The applicant was provided the opportunity to present information to the community design review board. The community design review board considered all of the comments received and the staff report, which are incorporated by reference into this resolution.

### **Section 2. Site and Building Plan Standards and Findings.**

2.01 City ordinance Section 2-290(b) requires that the community design review board make the following findings to approve plans:

1. That the design and location of the proposed development and its relationship to neighboring, existing or proposed developments and traffic is such that it will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood; that it will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring, existing or proposed developments; and that it will not create traffic hazards or congestion.
2. That the design and location of the proposed development is in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and is not detrimental to the harmonious, orderly and attractive development contemplated by this article and the city's comprehensive municipal plan.
3. That the design and location of the proposed development would provide a desirable environment for its occupants, as well as for its neighbors, and that it is aesthetically of good composition, materials, textures and colors.

### **Section 3. Findings.**

3.01 The proposal meets the specific conditional use permit standards.

### **Section 4. City Review Process.**

4.01 The City conducted the following review when considering the design review request.

1. On February 16, 2021, the community design review board reviewed this project and recommended that the city council approve this resolution.
2. On March 22, 2021, the city council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the planning commission and city staff.

Section 5. City Council.

5.01 The above-described site and design plans are hereby approved based on the findings outlined in Section 3 of this resolution. Subject to staff approval, the site must be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the site and design plans date-stamped February 4, 2021. Approval is subject to the applicant doing the following:

1. Repeat this review in two years if the city has not issued a building permit for this project.
2. All requirements of the fire marshal and building official must be met.
3. Meet all requirements in the engineering report, dated February 9, 2021.
4. Meet all requirements in the environmental report, dated March 9, 2021.
5. The applicant shall obtain all required permits from the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District.
6. All signs must meet the requirements of the city's sign ordinance. Freestanding or monument signs shall be designed to be consistent with the project's building materials and colors.
7. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit for staff approval the following items:
  - a. A revised site plan showing the inclusion of a sidewalk along County Road C East that also avoids the oak tree near the intersection of County Road C and Hazelwood Street.
  - b. Submit to staff elevations for the trash enclosure.
8. The applicant shall complete the following before occupying the building:
  - a. Replace any property irons removed because of this construction.
  - b. Provide continuous concrete curb and gutter around the parking lots and driveways.
  - c. Install all required landscaping and an in-ground lawn irrigation system for all landscaped areas.
  - d. Install all required outdoor lighting.
9. If any required work is not done, the city may allow temporary occupancy if:



- a. The city determines that the work is not essential to public health, safety or welfare.
  - b. The above-required letter of credit or cash escrow is held by the City of Maplewood for all required exterior improvements. The owner or contractor shall complete any unfinished exterior improvements by June 1 of the following year if occupancy of the building is in the fall or winter or within six weeks of occupancy of the building if occupancy is in the spring or summer.
10. All work shall follow the approved plans. The director of community development may approve minor changes.
11. The applicant shall eliminate the "N" signage on the building design.

\_\_\_\_\_ by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, on March 22, 2021.